

FORM B – BUILDING

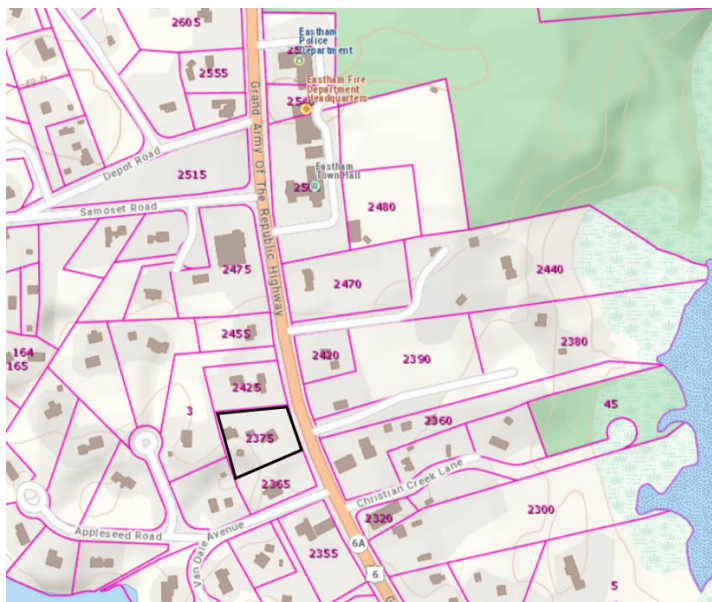
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View from NE.

Locus Map (north at top)



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson
Larson Fisher Associates
Organization: Eastham Historical Commission
Date: June 2020

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

15-72

ORLEANS

B

EAS.28

NR HD 1999

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Eastham Center

Address: 2375 State Highway

Historic Name: Knowles – Swift – Daley House

Uses: Present: historic house museum

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1741

Source: Eastham Historical Society

Style/Form: Colonial/Cape Cod

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood shingle/wood

Roof: wood shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Fishing Shack

A. Thomas Dill Beach Camp

Ranlett Tool Museum Building

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Kitchen wing added early 20th c.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.93

Setting: The house and associated buildings are situated on the State Highway amid dense roadside development comprised of historic properties, more recent summer cottage development and commercial buildings.

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Knowles – Swift – Daley House (aka Swift-Daley House), built ca. 1741, is a one-story wood frame single dwelling of the Cape Cod type with a traditional New England center chimney plan. The front façade contains five bays with a center entrance and transom flanked by windows and surmounted by a brick chimney in the ridge of the roof. The entrance is framed by fluted pilasters and a dentil course runs along the base of the frieze at the eave line; both features appear to be later additions. Both gable ends contain two windows on the first story and two in the upper gable story; a third window has been added to the gable on the south end. The existing kitchen wing is a 20th-century replacement of the original.

The house is centered on a one-acre site in a park-like setting with open lawns on all sides. No original outbuildings survive. In recent years buildings have been added to the property: a fisherman's shack of undisclosed origin, A. Thomas Dill's Beach Camp and a long rectangular building constructed for the Ranlett Tool Museum. A driveway enters the south end of the frontage and opens into a parking area before running back to the outbuildings.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The house at 2375 State Highway, since 1974 owned by Eastham Historical Society, has been called the Joshua Knowles House and has been dated to 1741. The title for the property can be traced soundly to October 1859, when Joshua Knowles (1816-69) sold the house, barn, outbuildings and land to the brothers Nathaniel and Gustavus Franklin Swift for \$650.¹ There were numerous men in Eastham, Wellfleet, and Truro who bore this name in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but the deed makes clear that this Joshua Knowles was the one who married Lucinda A. Doane in 1838 and moved with her to Topeka in the Kansas Territory in 1857; he returned briefly to Eastham about 1859 and then went back to Topeka, where he died in 1869.

The loss of early Eastham deeds makes it virtually impossible to determine who built 2375 State Highway, but two possibilities seem most likely. The Joshua Knowles who sold to the Swift brothers was the fifth Joshua in his direct Knowles family line and had been born in Truro; his father Joshua (1788-1867) lived all his life in Truro, as did his grandfather Joshua (1756-1822). If this house was built about 1741 by a Joshua Knowles, it would probably have been the first in his line, a son of Colonel John Knowles (1673-1757) and his wife Mary Sears and born in Eastham in 1696. He lived all his life and died in Eastham in 1786. His son, the second Joshua, was born in 1730 in Eastham but had probably moved to Truro about 1754, when he married Mary Harding of that town. A family historian stated in 1925 that the first Joshua Knowles (1696-1786) may have established his homestead on the north side of Town Cove shortly after his uncle Edward Knowles had; both had moved from the "Head of Town Cove"—that is, on its south side in what is now Orleans.² His four sons Jesse, Joshua, Josiah, and Simeon had all died by 1787, and this Joshua Knowles house was occupied "for many years by three widows," Joshua's own (possibly Phebe) and the widows of his sons Jesse (Sarah Walker Knowles) and Josiah (Rebecca Higgins Knowles). However, the 1790 Eastham census shows Rebecca, Phebe, and Sarah Knowles in separate households, and in 1798 only Rebecca Knowles had a dwelling counted in the federal direct tax.

Another possible origin of the 2375 State Highway house is Willard Knowles (1711-86), the younger brother of the first Joshua Knowles. His own house was apparently closer to Town Cove, but his son John (1744-1806) was taxed on three houses in 1798; his father might have built one of them for him at the time of his marriage to Susannah Walker in 1769. John and Susannah Knowles had a son named Joshua (1777-1831) who married Lydia Knowles (1783-1848) in 1804. In late October 1806, about a week before he died, John Knowles sold his son Joshua 8.5 acres bounded on the west by Muddy Pond and on the east by the county road, being "the said field that Joshua Knowles's house stands on."³ His father had likely given him the house at the time of his marriage in 1804. In 1826 this Joshua sold part of his late father's farm to Freeman Knowles 2d, who died in 1827, and in 1828 the administrator of Freeman Knowles's estate sold it to another Joshua Knowles, probably the one

¹ Joshua Knowles to Nathaniel Swift and Gustavus Swift, 26 October 1859, BCD 72:285.

² Charles Thornton Libby, "The Knowles Family of Eastham, Mass.," *New England Historical Genealogical Register* 80 (January 1926): 6-24.

³ John Knowles to Joshua Knowles, 29 October 1806, BCD 999041:333.

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married to Lucinda Doane who sold 2375 State Highway to the Swift Brothers.⁴ Still, the language of early deeds and the absence of maps before 1858 that show building owners and footprints make it very difficult to pin down the house's origin.

Whatever its early history may have been, the Joshua Knowles who owned 2375 State Highway in 1859 had probably moved from Truro to Eastham at the time of his marriage to Lucinda Doane in 1838. He is listed in this neighborhood in a household of five, and in 1850 the census credited him with \$1662 in real property. He lived then with his wife Lucinda, son Albert William (1839-1916) and Charles Osborn (1873-1916), and boarding laborer Isaac Doane, possibly his wife's brother. The house on this site has the name "J. Knowles" attached to it on the 1858 map, though he and his family had already begun their move to Topeka by that time.

Nathaniel Swift (1837-1901) and his younger brother Gustavus were born in Sandwich. Gustavus had trained as a butcher's helper with his older brother Noble but had decided to strike out on his own and begin a business further out on Cape Cod. He was listed in his parents' household in Sandwich in 1855 but in that year began driving cattle from the Brighton market near Boston to Eastham, where he had a butcher shop and slaughterhouse in the Thumpertown section. In 1861, according to his biography, he married Annie Maria Higgins of North Eastham. In late December 1860 he sold his half of the 2375 State Highway property to his brother Nathaniel and within a few years relocated to Barnstable and then to Boston; ultimately, he and his younger brother Edwin moved to Albany, then Buffalo, and eventually Chicago, where Gustavus Swift pioneered the developed of the ice-packed railroad car and began shipping dressed meat all over the country.⁵ An obituary for his brother Nathaniel called Gustavus "the millionaire packer of Chicago." Nathaniel, according to this account, was ordained to the Methodist ministry and had his first pastorate in Eastham, though the 1860 census lists him as a farmer. In June that year he married Celia Cornish of Plymouth, and like his brother he lived in Eastham only briefly. In 1863 he sold 2375 State Highway to Lewis Lombard for \$700 and moved to East Barnstable, where he bought the Captain Thomas Percival homestead; in 1875 he joined his brother's Chicago business, and he died there in 1901.⁶

Lewis Lombard (1819-98) was the son of Caleb and Abigail Higgins Lombard of Wellfleet. He had attended Holliston Academy and was living in his native town in 1844 when he married Lucinda C. Collins (1826-1917), a daughter of Michael Collins (1793-1886) and Dorcas Doane Cobb (1797-1855) of Eastham. The couple lived in Wellfleet with their sons Oliver Cromwell (1847-1927) and James H. (1851-1912) until Lombard acquired the Knowles/Swift property in 1863. Lombard was a master mariner, and in 1865 the state census lists him, his wife Lucinda, and their two sons in this neighborhood. He served the town of Eastham on its school committee in 1864, 1873-76, and 1891-94 and was tax collector and constable in 1889. When Lombard ran for state legislature in 1874, the *Boston Globe* described him as a Republican and "a thorough temperance man, but noncommittal on the subject of prohibition." He bought the Chatham-based schooner *Bloomer* in 1866 and was engaged in the seine fishery into the 1880s.⁷ Lombard was also active in the Wellfleet-based Blackfish Company, which regulated shares and sold its members' products.⁸

In April 1876 Lombard sold 2375 State Highway to Snow Young Higgins (1839-1917), the youngest son of Josiah K. Higgins (1791-1881) and his first wife Hannah Snow, and in February 1878 he bought sixteen acres on the west side of State Highway just to the south on which he planned to build a new house—2085 State Highway (EAS.25).⁹ Higgins was a mariner and a fisherman and had married Azubah Baker in 1868. In 1880, according to the census, he and his wife shared the 2375 State

⁴ The Joshua Knowles identified as a grantee in eight deeds between 1806 and 1828 must be Joshua (1777-1831), for he is always identified as of Eastham and as a housewright; the one who sold to the Swift Brothers is shown consistently as a resident of Truro in these years. The deeds were from his presumed father John (29 October 1806, BCD 999041:333), from this third cousin Harding Knowles (1779-1829, also a housewright) and his wife Margery, a daughter of John Knowles's older brother David (171739-1807) and Betsey Knowles, Margery's sister (15 April 1808, BCD 999041:336); from Harding Knowles and his widowed mother Rebecca Harding Knowles (7 January 1809, BCD 999041:342); from David Knowles, possibly his uncle David's son (7 October 1810, BCD 999041:337); from Philander Shaw, who lived in a house on the site of 2170 State Highway (23 October 1815, BD 999041:339; 19 October 1818, BCD 999041:338; and 28 January 1819, BCD 9991041:338); and Betsey Knowles, the second wife of Harding Knowles and another daughter of his uncle David (1739-1807, 10 October 1828, BCD 5:112). This last deed was for land on the north side of Philander Shaw's homestead, which would have been on the east side of State Highway.

⁵ Gustavus Swift to Nathaniel Swift, 29 December 1860, BCD 76:243

⁶ Nathaniel Swift to Lewis Lombard, 30 March 1863, BCD 82:159; "Death of Nathaniel Swift," *Barnstable Patriot*, 18 February 1901, 2; "Trayser Tells Anniversary Meeting about Barnstable Life of Swift Company Founder," *ibid.*, 28 January 1954, 1.

⁷ *Boston Globe*, 2 January 1874, 3; *Yarmouth Register*, 2 March 1866, 2; "Eastham," *Barnstable Patriot*, 22 July 1884, 3.

⁸ "Wellfleet," *Yarmouth Register*, 6 December 1884, 1.

⁹ Lewis Lombard to Snow Y. Higgins, 1 April 1876, BCD 129:390.

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Highway house with Walter O. Knowles, then keeper of the Life-Saving Station in Nauset, his wife Ada, and their infant son Leslie. The 1880 Eastham map attaches the name "S. Higgins" to the house.

Azubah Baker Higgins died in 1893, and in May 1895 Snow Higgins married again, to Mary G. Smith, the daughter of Clarington and Effie Smith of South Eastham. The 1900 census lists Higgins as a farmer in a household with his second wife and her mother; in 1910 Higgins was still farming, and he and his wife shared the household with a fourteen-year-old domestic servant. Mary G. Smith Higgins died in 1913, and Snow Higgins died in August 1917.¹⁰ In November 1918 his siblings and other heirs sold 2375 State Highway on its 12-acre parcel to Stanley E. Horton of Newtonville, who owned it for the next two decades and either rented it or used it now and then as a seasonal home.¹¹

An Eastham native, Stanley Earle Horton (1877-1945) was the son of fisherman Reuben H. Horton (1845-1925) and his wife Cynthia Clark (1848-1917). He lived in Brattleboro, Vermont, in the late 1890s but by 1903 had moved to Boston. In 1905 he married Louise Goodrich Cony (1878-1956) in her native Augusta, Maine, and by 1910 they were living in the Boston suburb of Newton with children Anna G. and Stanley E. Jr. and a domestic servant. Horton was by then managing the New England Rendering Company abattoir at the Brighton Cattle Market and was also treasurer of the company by 1918. In 1925 he was the treasurer of both the rendering company and the provisioner S. S. Learnard Company in Faneuil Hall Market in Boston.

Beginning about 1918, Stanley Horton and his family began to buy property in his native town and had Eastham builder George Gill build him a "bungalow," possibly the same cottage as the newspaper called "Hate-to-quit-it" by 1918. He is shown as a summer resident of a property on Samoset Road in the 1929 Eastham directory. In September 1939 he sold 2375 State Highway to Raymond L. and Verena R. Daley of Mendon.¹² Raymond Leroy Daley (1892-1972) was born in Mendon; his father William was a carpenter. He married Verena Ruby Springer (1895-1990) in 1916 and then served in France with the headquarters company of 301st Massachusetts Infantry during the First World War. By 1930 he supervised production for a beverage company, wife Verena was the home service director for an electric utility, and they had three children—Warren L., Dorcas M., and Marston E. In 1932 the Daleys bought land on Cook's Brook Road in North Eastham and built a cottage there, and they built at least one other cottage on that road later in the decade; by 1940 the newspaper called these and perhaps other buildings "the Daley cottages." By that year Raymond Daley and his children Dorcas and Marston have moved to 2375 State Highway, and Verena Daley and son Warren often visited from Mendon. Daley continued to build houses through the 1940s.¹³

The Daleys restored the 2375 State Highway house, which had apparently been vacant and neglected for some years. In 1972 Raymond Daley died, and in October 1974 Verena R. Daley subdivided the property. The next month she deeded a little less than an acre and the 2375 State Highway house, apparently with antiques she had collected and used here, to Eastham Historical Society. The society has been the owner of record since.¹⁴

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¹⁰ "Eastham. Death of Mrs. Higgins," *Barnstable Patriot*, 26 May 1913, 5; "Eastham. Death of Snow Y. Higgins," *Hyannis Patriot*, 6 Aug 1917, 4.

¹¹ Elbridge Higgins, Topeka KS; Willis Higgins, Nantucket; Hannah Atkins and Hannah Holway, Provincetown; Simeon C. Brown, Emma Brown, Ella Freeman, Mrs. Hattie A. Dyer, all Wellfleet; Asa O. Brown, Somerville; Pauline F. Atkins, Boston; G. Walter Snow, Cambridge; Fred Y. Snow, Dublin NH; Helen Snow Davenport, Forest Hills Garden Long Island; Russell S. Higgins; Elizabeth W. Higgins as widow of Alonzo K. Higgins and executor will Alonzo K. Higgins, to Stanley E. Horton, Newtonville, 12 November 1918, BCD 365:527.

¹² Stanley E. Horton, Newton, to Raymond L. and Verena R. Daley, Mendon, 15 September 1939, BCD 557:451.

¹³ "North Eastham," *Hyannis Patriot*, 11 May 1933, 14, and 4 June 1936, 3; "Eastham," *Barnstable Patriot*, 29 August 1940; "Eastham Girl Builds Own House," *Yarmouth Register*, 6 May 1949, 7. This last article is about Dorcas M. Daley Gill, who married Orleans High School classmate Merton Gill; they graduated in 1941; it alludes to her consulting with her "brother" Raymond Daley, then building a house nearby. Raymond was her father.

¹⁴ Verena R. Daley to Eastham Historical Society, 7 November 1974, BCD 2131:345. The house is depicted on Lot 7 of "Plan of Land in Eastham, Mass. as Made for Verena R. Daley," 30 October 1974, BCP 290:82.

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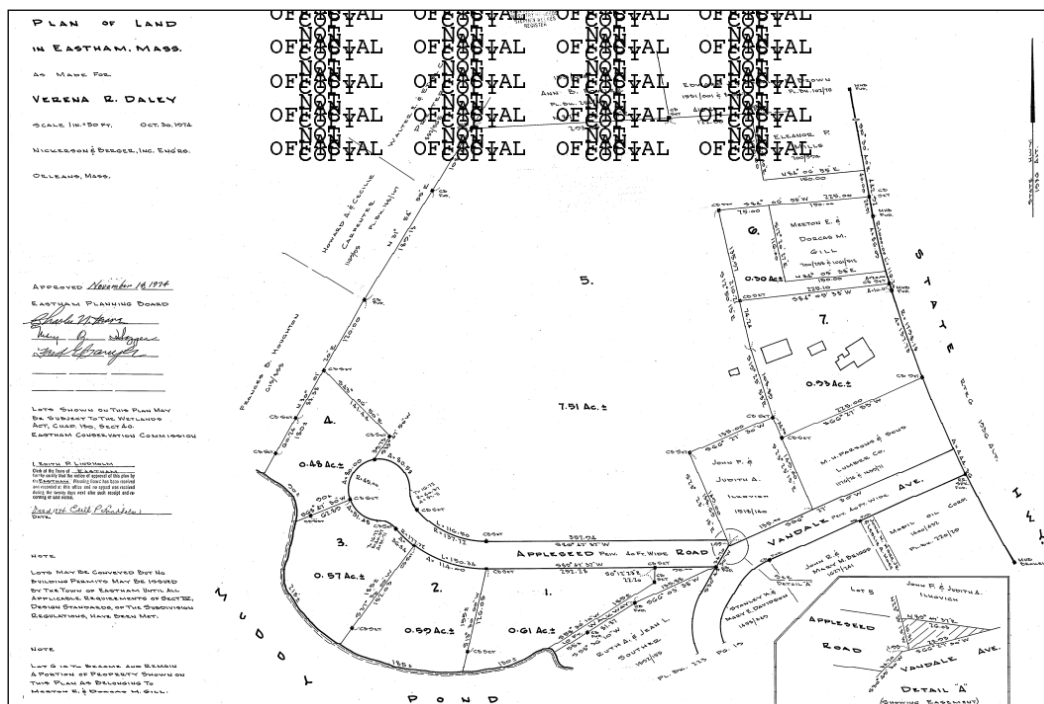
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SUPPLEMENTAL IMAGES



The 2375 State Highway house is depicted on Lot 7 on Verena Daley's 1974 subdivision plan (BCD 290:82).

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PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2019 unless otherwise noted)



View from SE.



View from SW.

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View from NW.



View of outbuildings from SE. A. Thomas Dill's Beach Camp (left) Ranlett Tool Museum (center), fisherman's shack (right).

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View of fisherman's shack from NW.



View of A. Thomas Dill's Beach Camp from NW.